

May 27, 2010
Statesboro, GA

Workshop

The Board of Commissioners met for a Budget Workshop at 8:30 a.m. in the Community Room of the North Main Annex.

The following commissioners were present: Chairman Nevil, Vice Chairman Rushing, Commissioner Simmons, Commissioner Mosley, Commissioner Thompson, and Commissioner Gibson. The following staff were present: County Manager Thomas Couch, Clerk of the Board Maggie Fitzgerald, Statesboro Bulloch County Parks and Recreation Director Mike Rollins, Chief Financial Officer Harry Starling, Library Director Sharon Rowe, Public Safety Director Ted Wynn, and Development Services Director Andy Welch.

Chairman Nevil called the Workshop to order, and called on County Manager Thomas Couch to initiate the discussion regarding the matter, and Mr. Couch directed the Board's attention to a Power Point Presentation regarding the FY 2011 General Appropriations Budget (GAB) Workshop. Mr. Couch stated that the main topic of discussion would be the General Fund since it is the County's primary reporting vehicle for finances within the entire budget.

Mr. Couch began the presentation with an overview summarizing the economic outlook and impact upon the budget, and stated that the recession remains persistent, unemployment rates are still high, credit conditions are tight, economic stimulus package produced limited results, state budget reductions continue, and county building permits are down, but stabilizing. Mr. Couch discussed the impact of State and Federal legislation on the GAB including the \$1.25 million dollar in revenue loss to the General Fund due to the State's Homeowner's Tax Relief Grant cut, and stated that the county's elastic revenues will stabilize thanks to House Bill 1055, there will be no growth for ad valorem tax assessments and revenues, and that sales taxes are stabilizing.

Mr. Couch stated that the objectives for FY 2011 are: (1) Maintain the existing level of service; (2) Maintain the level of project delivery in the Capital Improvements Plan; (3) Target strategic cost savings for employee health insurance, energy efficiency and other costs; and (4) General Fund appropriations are expected to be at a level of

\$29.85 million dollars. Mr. Couch discussed the funding priorities by governmental function and baseline budgeting by departments and outside agencies. Mr. Couch explained the FY 2011 General Fund revenue estimates as follows: (1) Property and excise taxes are flat; (2) Licenses and permits will show modest increases; (3) Intergovernmental revenues will rise sharply, but mostly from federal prisoner housing, which should not be relied on as a major revenue source on a long-term recurring basis; (4) Court fees and fines will be bolstered by HB 1055; and (5) Rents, investment income and miscellaneous revenues will be flat. Mr. Couch discussed the FY 2011 expenditures including employee health insurance premium increases, establishment of a DUI Court, major election year increases, reducing year-end leave cash-outs, limiting travel, and paying off the GEFA loan for the Gateway Water Tank and the Wachovia loan for the Courtland Street building.

Mr. Couch reviewed the immediate and advanced cost containment or reduction strategies that included developing a 3% contingency operating cost reduction plan, consider implementing four-day work weeks where feasible, and deferring minor capital outlays in the General Fund until 2012 by using a portion of expected FY 2010 surplus applicable to unmet needs. Mr. Couch summarized the basic expenditure strategies as follows: (1) Eliminate non-essential public relations and marketing costs; (2) Begin energy efficient building initiatives; (3) Review existing service contracts for re-bid; (4) Outside agencies should expect no additional funding; and (5) State funded agencies should not expect the county to make up shortfalls. Mr. Couch explained the updated unmet needs list and a few housekeeping items, and then summarized the deferred unmet needs list of personnel, minor capital outlays, and major capital outlays.

In conclusion, Mr. Couch stated the County will have a tight, but, responsible budget, on-going cost containment strategies are needed to reduce uncertainty in this economic climate, and that the County can survive this until the economy improves. Mr. Couch asked the Board for any questions or comments regarding his presentation. Commissioner Thompson stated that he would like to meet the Elections Board members, and discussed the cost increases due to the creation of the Board. After further discussion regarding the Elections Board, Commissioner Gibson discussed budgeting for a new or updated county website. Without further discussion, Mr. Couch yielded the floor to the

Chairman. Chairman Nevil asked for further questions or comments from the Board.
Hearing none, Chairman Nevil adjourned the Budget Workshop at 9:45 a.m.

J. Garrett Nevil, Chairman

Attest: Maggie Fitzgerald, Clerk of the Board